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Letter dated 26 January 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On the instructions of my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a copy of the letter dated 14 January 2005 from the Deputy Director of the Office of the President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire addressed to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for Côte d'Ivoire (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Philippe D. **Djangoné-Bi**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 26 January 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Letter dated 14 January 2005 from the Deputy Director of the Office of the President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire addressed to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for Côte d'Ivoire

I have the honour to address you in order to communicate my concern over the tone taken recently by the opposition press, which is clearly making every effort to poison the fragile atmosphere of calm that Côte d'Ivoire is currently experiencing.

In a situation so delicate, the priority of all should be to foster a return to dialogue, allay tensions and avoid the diffusion of false information likely to turn groups of people against one another.

For example, *Le Patriote* on page 5 of its issue No. 1578 of 4 January 2005 published an article with the headline "Rebuilding the death squads at the highest levels of Government" by Mr. Edgar Kouassi, which speaks of "opposition leaders and journalists on the Gbagbo black list".

News reports of this kind are a concern to all of us. This daily paper, *Le Patriote*, published other hate articles prior to the conflict, describing, for example, the division of Côte d'Ivoire into two parts, the northern part to become an Islamic State. The situation of Côte d'Ivoire since 19 September 2003 shows that they were in fact announcing the terrible war in which the country has been enmeshed for over two years.

Now the same daily paper is prophesying assassinations.

In view of the responsibility of the national and foreign media in setting off and prolonging the crisis, as was stressed on page 46 of the report of the United Nations International Commission of Inquiry on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire, I would like to request that you take note of what is written in the press and in particular in *Le Patriote*. If they cannot publish truthful, cool-headed information that could promote a return to peace, the press and other media should at least refrain from adding to the already tense social environment.

We should all take to heart the appeal to reconciliation, national unity and peace sent out by President Laurent Gbagbo in his address to the nation on 31 December 2004.

President Gbagbo asked everyone, and in particular the press and other media, to refrain from statements that could incite to intolerance and hatred.

We must all cultivate a spirit of peace and tolerance conducive to national unity.

(*Signed*) S. **Ottro Zirignon-Touré**
Deputy Director of the Office of the President of the Republic
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the
United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI)